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THE HINDUSTAN TIMES DELHI 31 JULY 2026

ADANI GROUP HAS NO PLANS TO OPERATE AN AIRLINE, SAYS CFO

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MUMBAI: The Adani Group is exploring the possibility of picking a non-controlling stake in regional carriers to improve connectivity to its existing and future small airports, but has no plans to operate an airline, a top executive said on Wednesday.

"We're not starting an airline or business, but to be able to support the development of an airline for regional connectivity is our interest," Adani Group's chief financial officer (CFO) Jugeshinder Singh told analysts during a post-earnings call of flagship firm Adani Enterprises Ltd.

The clarification comes four days after Adani Enterprises informed stock exchanges that it was "not evaluating any proposal to enter the airline business."

Airport operators can hold up to a 10% equity stake in an airline under existing regulations.

Singh said that a recent letter written by Adani Airport Holdings, an entity under Adani Enterprises, to the Airports Authority of India, seeking a change in rules to allow it to have a larger stake in an airline, should be viewed in the context of promoting regional connectivity rather than as a precursor to launching an airline.

"We want to see, as owners of airports and regional airports, that India's regional airline system also develops and develops properly," he said.

The clarification follows a report by The Economic Times last week that the Ahmedabad-based conglomerate had written to the AAI seeking a waiver of the clause that prevents the airport operator from holding more than a 10% stake in any scheduled carrier, fuelling speculation that the infrastructure conglomerate was preparing to enter India's commercial aviation market.

Singh dismissed the report and said the company's intent was misunderstood.

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AMAR UJALA DELHI 31 JULY 2026

पहले चरण की एयर एंबुलेंस परियोजना में फरीदाबाद शामिल, जल्द शुरू होगा काम

फरीदाबाद। हरियाणा सरकार की हेलीकॉप्टर आधारित एयर एंबुलेंस परियोजना के पहले चरण में फरीदाबाद को शामिल किया गया है। इसके तहत श्री अटल बिहारी वाजपेयी राजकीय चिकित्सा महाविद्यालय, फरीदाबाद में हेलीपैड विकसित किया जाएगा। इसके शुरू होने से गंभीर मरीजों को जरूरत पड़ने पर कम समय में उच्च चिकित्सा संस्थानों तक पहुंचाना संभव हो सकेगा।

हरियाणा एयरपोर्ट्स डेवलपमेंट कार्पोरेशन (एचएडीसी) की बोर्ड बैठक में इस प्रस्ताव को मंजूरी दी गई। नागर विमानन मंत्री विपुल गोयल की अध्यक्षता में हुई बैठक में फरीदाबाद के साथ गुरुग्राम, रोहतक (पीजीआई), करनाल और सोनीपत के सरकारी चिकित्सा महाविद्यालयों को भी पहले चरण में शामिल किया गया। इन केंद्रों से भविष्य में हेलीकॉप्टर आपातकालीन चिकित्सा सेवा संचालित की जाएगी।

मुख्यमंत्री नायब सिंह सैनी की मंजूरी के बाद नागर विमानन मंत्री विपुल गोयल ने अधिकारियों को नागरिक उड्डयन महानिदेशालय की स्वीकृतियां, तकनीकी परीक्षण, स्थल सर्वेक्षण और अन्य आवश्यक औपचारिकताएं तय समयसीमा में पूरी करने के निर्देश दिए हैं, ताकि परियोजना जल्द शुरू हो सके। विपुल गोयल ने कहा कि यह परियोजना केवल एयर एंबुलेंस सेवा तक सीमित नहीं रहेगी। विकसित होने वाला हेलीपैड आपदा प्रबंधन, राहत एवं बचाव कार्यों तथा अन्य आपात स्थितियों में भी उपयोगी होगा। संवाद

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DESHBANDHU DELHI 31 JULY 2026

नोएडा एयरपोर्ट कार्गो रोड का पहला चरण पूरा

- अब कार्गो टर्मिनल तक बनेगी सीधी कनेक्टिविटी
- 2.5 किमी नए हिस्से के लिए टेंडर जारी
- भविष्य में खुर्जा-पलवल एक्सप्रेसवे से भी जुड़ेगा मार्ग

ग्रेटर नोएडा, 30 जुलाई (देशबन्धु)। नोएडा इंटरनेशनल एयरपोर्ट के लिए विकसित की जा रही डेडिकेटेड कार्गो रोड का 8.25 किलोमीटर लंबा पहला चरण पूरी तरह तैयार हो गया है। अब इस सड़क को सीधे कार्गो टर्मिनल से जोड़ने के लिए करीब 2.5 किलोमीटर लंबे अगले हिस्से का निर्माण जल्द शुरू होगा। यमुना प्राधिकरण ने इसके लिए टेंडर प्रक्रिया शुरू कर दी है।

चार लेन और 30 मीटर चौड़ी यह सड़क सेक्टर-32 स्थित दयानतपुर के पास 60 मीटर रोड से शुरू होती है। राष्ट्रीय राजमार्ग प्राधिकरण (एनएचएआई) ने करीब 296 करोड़ रुपए की लागत से इसका निर्माण कराया है। पहले भूमि संबंधी अड़चनों के कारण कुछ हिस्सा अधूरा रह गया था, लेकिन यमुना प्राधिकरण द्वारा समस्याओं का समाधान किए जाने के बाद अब पूरा 8.25 किलोमीटर मार्ग तैयार हो चुका है।

अब पहले चरण में लगभग ढाई किलोमीटर सड़क का निर्माण कर इसे सीधे एयरपोर्ट के कार्गो टर्मिनल से जोड़ा जाएगा। इससे मालवाहक वाहनों की आवाजाही और लॉजिस्टिक्स संचालन अधिक तेज और सुगम हो सकेगा। इसके बाद अगले चरण में इस मार्ग का विस्तार प्रस्तावित खुर्जा-पलवल एक्सप्रेसवे तक किया जाएगा। इस विस्तार परियोजना पर लगभग 459 करोड़ रुपए खर्च होने का अनुमान है।

कार्गो रोड को एयरपोर्ट के रनवे की ओर बनाए गए इमरजेंसी गेट से भी जोड़ा जाएगा। भारी वाहनों के आवागमन को ध्यान में रखकर तैयार की जा रही यह सड़क आपातकालीन परिस्थितियों में राहत एवं आपदा प्रबंधन वाहनों के लिए भी महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका निभाएगी।

यमुना प्राधिकरण के जीएम प्रोजेक्ट राजेंद्र भाटी ने बताया कि एयरपोर्ट के लिए 8.25 किलोमीटर कार्गो रोड का निर्माण पूरा हो चुका है। अब कार्गो टर्मिनल तक करीब 2.5 किलोमीटर लंबे अगले हिस्से का निर्माण शुरू कराने के लिए टेंडर प्रक्रिया प्रारंभ कर दी गई है।

ग्रेटर नोएडा के चार औद्योगिक सेक्टर जगमगाएंगे

- 2.91 करोड़ से लगेंगी 696 स्ट्रीट लाइटें

ग्रेटर नोएडा। औद्योगिक क्षेत्रों में बुनियादी सुविधाओं को मजबूत करने के लिए ग्रेटर नोएडा प्राधिकरण ने चार प्रमुख इंडस्ट्रियल सेक्टरों में आधुनिक प्रकाश व्यवस्था विकसित करने की योजना शुरू कर दी है। करीब 2.91 करोड़ रुपए की लागत से इकोटेक-11, इकोटेक-2, इकोटेक-1 एक्सटेंशन-1 और इकोटेक-1 एक्सटेंशन में नई स्ट्रीट लाइटें, बिजली के खंभे और हाईमास्ट एलईडी लाइटें स्थापित की जाएंगी। इसके लिए टेंडर प्रक्रिया शुरू कर दी गई है और अगले एक-दो महीने में कार्य शुरू होने की संभावना है।

परियोजना के तहत 696 नई स्ट्रीट लाइटें और 565 बिजली के खंभे लगाए जाएंगे। साथ ही प्रमुख चौराहों और अधिक आवाजाही वाले स्थानों पर हाईमास्ट एलईडी लाइटें स्थापित की जाएंगी, जिससे बड़े क्षेत्र में बेहतर रोशनी उपलब्ध हो सके। एलईडी तकनीक अपनाने से बिजली की खपत कम होगी और रखरखाव का खर्च भी घटेगा। इन औद्योगिक सेक्टरों में लंबे समय से कई स्थानों पर पर्याप्त रोशनी नहीं होने के कारण उद्यमियों, कर्मचारियों और मालवाहक वाहनों के चालकों को रात के समय परेशानी का सामना करना पड़ता है। नई लाइटिंग व्यवस्था लागू होने के बाद सुरक्षा व्यवस्था मजबूत होगी, रात्रिकालीन यातायात सुगम बनेगा और उद्योगों के संचालन के लिए बेहतर माहौल तैयार होगा।

ग्रेटर नोएडा प्राधिकरण के विद्युत अभियांत्रिकी विभाग ने एजेंसी चयन की प्रक्रिया शुरू कर दी है। एजेंसी के चयन के बाद चारों सेक्टरों में चरणबद्ध तरीके से काम कराया जाएगा। अधिकारियों का कहना है कि परियोजना पूरी होने पर हजारों कर्मचारियों और उद्यमियों को इसका सीधा लाभ मिलेगा। सीईओ एनजी रवि कुमार ने कहा कि ग्रेटर नोएडा के सभी सेक्टरों में चरणबद्ध तरीके से प्रकाश व्यवस्था को आधुनिक बनाया जा रहा है। इसी कड़ी में चार औद्योगिक सेक्टरों में नई स्ट्रीट लाइट, बिजली के खंभे और हाईमास्ट एलईडी लाइटें लगाकर बुनियादी सुविधाओं को और बेहतर किया जाएगा।

DECCAN CHRONICLE HYDERABAD 30 JULY 2026

Sathya Sai airport project gets 76-acre land approval

NAGABHUSHANAM HOSKOTE | DC
ANANTAPUR, JULY 29

The Andhra Pradesh government has cleared 76.13 acres of land in Brah-manapalli and Puttap-arthi villages of Putta-parthi mandal in Satya Sai district from the list of prohibited properties, for an aviation project.

This paves the way for registration of the land in favour of SSS Aerospace Pvt Ltd that would develop an integrated aviation and aerospace infrastructure facility.

While the aerospace project was sanctioned by the Centre adjacent to Pu-ttaparthi airport, the land is part of the existing Sri Sathya Sai airport and st-ands in the name of the Sri Sathya Sai Central Tr-ust, Prasanthi Nilayam.

According to the order, the land had been alienated to the trust for the formation and extension of the airstrip, and it continued to remain in the 22-A prohibited properties list.

The land had been util-ised for the purpose for which it was originally al-ienated and the government now decided to rem-ove it from the prohibited list in view of the airport development plan, following a request from the Sri Sathya Sai Central Trust.

Officials said the move is linked to the proposed setting up of an integrated, state-of-the-art aviation and aerospace infrastructure facility at Puttaparthi by SSS Aero- space Pvt Ltd.

The government had earlier extended support for the Integr-ation and Flight-Testing Complex project of the Aeronautical Agency, Department of Defence R&D, at Puttaparthi.

The government order also noted that land had been provided for the advanced medium combat aircraft project, which would function as a core integration, development and flight-testing centre adjoining the facility.

The airport runway is proposed to be extended to 10,000 feet, along with a buffer zone, ATC tower, navigation aids, meteorological facilities and other infrastructure required for flight testing.

SSS Aerospace will have to execute a tripartite agr-eement with the defence ministry and the state Pradesh government for long-term utilisation and maintenance of the runway before commencement of the operations.

The move is expected to facilitate the next stage of development of Puttaparthi as an aviation and aerospace hub, with the airport infrastructure being planned to support both commercial and defence-related flight-testing requirements and aerospace investments Puttaparthi MLA Palle Sindhura Reddy said.

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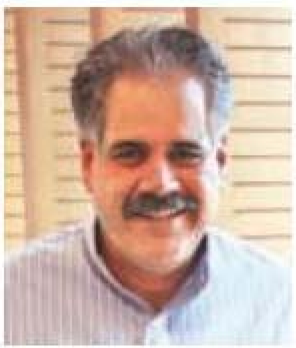
BUSINESS STANDARD DELHI 31 JULY 2026

Pilot duty rules make aviation uncompetitive: Bhatia



“THE INDIAN CONSUMER IS SO PRICE SENSITIVE THAT IF YOU CAN LOWER FARES, YOU JUST OPEN UP A MASSIVE DEMAND”

Rahul Bhatia
Managing Director, IndiGo

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi, 30 July

IndiGo Managing Director Rahul Bhatia has called for a review of India's pilot flight duty time rules, saying these norms erode cockpit productivity, inflate airline costs and make the country's aviation sector "uncompetitive" compared with global peers.

"I think Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL) needs a review, and I think there's enough conversation going on with the government. All we want to do is appeal to the government that we must follow the global best practices," Bhatia told *PTI* in an interview.

These remarks are one of the airline's strongest public criticisms of the revised Flight Duty Time Limitations (FDTL) norms, which came into force in November 2025 and contributed to widespread flight disruptions at IndiGo during last year's peak travel season.

The Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) implemented the revised FDTL norms in phases last year to reduce pilot fatigue.

The rules increased mandatory weekly rest from 36 hours to 48 hours, capped night flying by limiting night duty and the number of night landings, and revised duty period calculations to account for circadian rhythm and fatigue. Airlines had argued the changes would require more pilots and increase operating costs, while pilot associations backed the norms as a long-pending safety measure.

"We were in the eye of the storm" during the implementation of the new rules," Bhatia said. "So when you come up with a policy where the productivity in the cockpit diminishes to the extent it has, it makes Indian aviation uncompetitive," he said. "It directly impacts the cost structure." Bhatia said and added that airlines were not arguing for lower safety standards but for regulations aligned with international practices.

He also urged the government to cut taxes and rationalise airport charges, arguing that lower airfares would unlock "massive" demand in one of the world's fastest-growing aviation markets and accusing policymakers of taxing flying as if it were "an elitist mode of transport". "On the one side, we say that flying by air has become a public utility, yet we treat taxes on it as if it's an elitist mode of transport," Bhatia said.

"I think some of these things have to get rationalised. Because the Indian consumer is so price sensitive that if you can lower fares, you just open up a massive demand." Bhatia said airlines had largely absorbed cost pressures instead of passing them on to passengers.

No Dreamliner fuel switch fault found, says govt.

DC CORRESPONDENT WITH AGENCY INPUTS
NEW DELHI, JUL 29

The government has said that Boeing's detailed examination of the Dreamliner aircraft's fuel control switch locking mechanism did not find any abnormality following an Air India pilot flagging possible issues with the system after operating a London-Bengaluru flight in February this year.

The government statement, in a written reply by Union minister of state for civil aviation Murlidhar Mohol to the Rajya Sabha, did not refer to the fuel switches of Air India flight AI171, also a Boeing 787-8, that crashed in Ahmedabad immediately after take-off on July 12 last year. Even in that case, the jetliner's fuel switches have been under the spotlight because a preliminary inquiry said they were switched off within a gap of one second. A full report into the investigation is pending. The minister's statement pertained to a February 2 incident in which an Air India pilot reported a defect in the fuel control switch of the Boeing 787-8 plane after operating the AI132 flight. The plane was grounded for checks after it landed in Bengaluru from London's Heathrow airport. Following the incident, the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) directed Boeing to test the fuel control switch locking mechanism. Mohol said the DGCA, as part of continued airworthiness, had directed Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM)-level testing of the fuel control switch locking mechanism in Seattle. "Detailed examination of Fuel Control Switch, including structural integrity of Fuel Control Switch detents, was carried out and no abnormality was observed. However, further inspection of the complete 'Thrust Control Module' at the OEM facility is underway," the minister said.

SWITCH CLEARED

- Seattle testing showed normal mechanism
- Fuel switch detents structurally sound
- Thrust Control Module under inspection
- Minister cites ongoing investigation
- AAIB final report awaited
- Investigation involves multiple variables
- International review process continuing
- No defects found fleetwide
- OEM testing followed DGCA directive
- Fuel switch focus continues
- Cockpit recording raised confusion
- One pilot denied switching off

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THE ECONOMIC TIMES DELHI 31 JULY 2026

'About 34% Of IndiGo Capacity's Deployed in Unique Mkts'

India must have one or two strong airlines with large mkt shares in order to compete against global aviation hubs: InterGlobe MD

Arindam Majumder

New Delhi: A third of IndiGo's fleet capacity is deployed on routes where no other airline operates currently, said Rahul Bhatia, promoter and managing director of InterGlobe Aviation, which runs the airline. He was pushing back against scrutiny of the carrier's dominance of the Indian market.

Bhatia also said it is imperative for the country to have one or two strong airlines with large market shares if it intends to compete against global aviation power hubs.

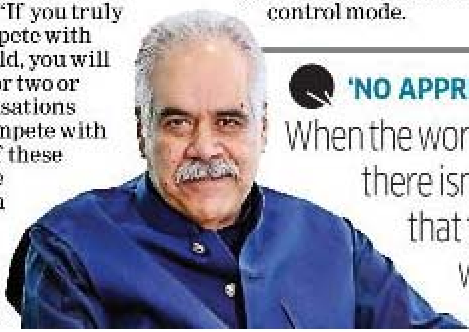
"About 34% of our capacity is deployed in unique markets where nobody else flies," Bhatia, told ET in an interview. "It is not that other airlines cannot fly in these markets but they choose not to. When the world talks about our market share, generally, there isn't an appreciation of the fact that within that there's a large chunk of flying that we do which is unique to IndiGo."

Bhatia drew comparisons with Emirates in Dubai, Singapore Airlines, and Qantas in Australia, arguing that scale is inevitable for any airline that wants to compete globally. "If you truly want India to compete with the rest of the world, you will have to build one or two or three large organisations that are able to compete with the heft of some of these large carriers," he said. IndiGo held a 66.3% share of India's domestic market as of June, according to the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA). India's leading market share has come under scanner, especially after the carrier's operational meltdown last December, marked by the cancellation of more than 3,000 flights in a week, grounding India's air travel industry and forcing the government into crisis control mode.

"The event was essentially coming together of several different things," said Bhatia, speaking about the widespread operational disruptions. "We had the new pilot rest norms that came into play; we had cyclones in Chennai, a software upgrade on our entire fleet, and some volcanic ash activity coming out of Africa. Several things came together, and the outcome was what it was," he said, terming the developments as regrettable.

Since the December crisis, IndiGo has built more operational resilience by holding an internal review, reorganising the network, and rostering of pilots, said Bhatia. The airline has also conducted audits through external consultants and is also working with consultancy Oliver Wyman to build early-warning systems.

"We are now prepared to implement the pilot rest rules in its more stringent norms," said Bhatia. "For the winter schedule that we have submitted this year is built around the most stringent form of pilot rest rules. On that, our aircraft utilisation is north of 14 hours."



'NO APPRECIATION'

When the world talks about our market share, there isn't an appreciation of the fact that there's a large chunk of flying we do that is unique to IndiGo

RAHUL BHATIA, MD, InterGlobe Aviation

FOR FULL REPORT, GO TO www.economictimes.com

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THE FINANCIAL EXPRESS DELHI 31 JULY 2026

IndiGo's Bhatia seeks tax cuts

INDIGO MANAGING DIRECTOR Rahul Bhatia urged the government to cut taxes and rationalise airport charges, arguing that lower airfares would unlock "massive" demand in one of the world's fastest-growing aviation markets and accusing policymakers of taxing flying as if it were "an elitist mode of transport".

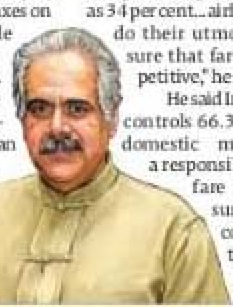
"On the one side, we say that flying by air has become a public utility, yet we treat taxes on it as if it's an elitist mode of transport," Bhatia told PTI in an interview.

"I think some of these things have to get rationalised. Because the Indian consumer is so price sensitive that if you can lower fares, you just open up a massive demand." Bhatia said airlines had largely absorbed cost pressures instead of passing them on to passengers.

"So, in a time span of three years where inflation has risen by 12 per cent, airfares, which represent the fares that the airline collects for themselves, have gone up between 1% and 3%. UDF charges at airports have gone up as much as 95%.

"Landing and parking charges have gone up as much as 34 per cent... airlines actually do their utmost to make sure that fares are competitive," he noted.

He said IndiGo, which controls 66.3% of India's domestic market, had a responsibility to lead fare hikes when surging costs made them unavoidable.



भारतीय विमानपत्तन प्राधिकरण
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THE HINDUSTAN TIMES DELHI 31 JULY 2026

Air India's turnaround goes off the flight plan

As the fifth anniversary of the purchase of Air India by the Tatas — they bought the airline from the government in October 2021 — approaches, the airline's turnaround has turned into a theatre of the absurd.

CEO Campbell Wilson is set to exit in September, and Air India's announcement earlier this month of plans to set up an interim panel to run it sparked a joke in civil aviation circles: Why not set up a CoS — committee of (former civil aviation) secretaries — to run the airline?

Some industry representatives find the idea of a panel quite unfathomable. The absurdity of the leadership vacuum was made stark by a press release issued on April 7 that announced Wilson's resignation; it added that Wilson conveyed his decision to exit the airline as far back as 2024 but had agreed to stay until the airline found an appropriate replacement.

Anjuli Bhargava

This startling piece of information raises two critical questions. First, why does the airline find itself flat-footed and without a CEO in July 2026 if Wilson communicated his intent to leave in 2024? Surely, two years is adequate time for the Tata-group-backed airline to find his replacement?

Second, it can be argued that the airline's board and the Tata management were remiss to allow a situation where someone whose heart was clearly no longer in the job continued for so many months after his decision to relinquish charge.

The recent induction of a former civil aviation secretary as executive advisor to the Air India chairman and member of the managing committee has also raised eyebrows. Airline insiders are asking what the Tatas expect Pradeep Kharola to achieve as advisor that he couldn't when he had full freedom to act, as the airline's chairman and managing director (2017-19, when the airline was with the government). The appointment also took several months to materialise, evidence of the kind of stasis the airline finds itself in.

Air India's balance sheet exacerbates the situation. In FY26, the airline recorded its worst ever annual loss, at ₹26,800 crore, taking the overall losses after the Tata takeover to more than ₹58,000 crore. This also pulled down the performance of Singapore Airlines, which holds a 25% stake in the airline.

No wonder then that the carrier has been forced to halt annual increments and even cut pay for those above a certain grade. It is also rejigging "over the top" contracts and cutting excessive discretionary spending that had been normalised under the plea of offering "nothing but the best".

Tata group chairman (also the chairman of the Air India board) N Chandrasekaran's statement earlier this week, that a full turnaround of the airline could take up to 10 years created minor shockwaves in the industry, which had expected far quicker results under the Tata leadership.

Perhaps the most significant work in progress (WIP) remains the airline's culture and handling of staff. As one airline insider put it, there was too much focus on the external workings of the airline and too little on the internal. The exit of old staffers and employees — in a bid to boast of a younger staff pool — has proved a double-edged sword, with the airline losing valuable experience and industry knowledge due to the departures.

Along with the tragic crash last June, government officials who worked to materialise the sale of Air India to the Tatas are also embarrassed at the failure of the much-anticipated turnaround. A senior government official who had strongly supported the Air India deal with the Tatas told this writer that he struggles to make sense of this "unravelling" and is hard-pressed to list what has gone right in the experiment so far.

The reality is that an increasing number of senior sectoral experts and professionals see the issue as rooted in poor governance; some say that it makes for a good business-school case study, a classic "how not to do it" manual.

Anjuli Bhargava writes on governance, infrastructure, and the social sector. The views expressed are personal

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THE HINDUSTAN TIMES DELHI 31 JULY 2026

IndiGo maps flight to global skies, after building India fort

Varun Sood & Satish John
varun.sood@livemint.com

NEW DELHI: After spending two decades building India's largest domestic airline, IndiGo is preparing for its next act: becoming a global airline by carrying Indian travellers to international destinations through hubs in India, according to its top executive.

"Twenty years have gone into building essentially a domestic airline... That's now our fort," Rahul Bhatia, promoter and managing director of IndiGo, said in an interview with Mint.

"The next stage of evolution has to be that we can carry Indians from here, through a hub or hubs, to the world," he added.

Bhatia noted that this traffic has historically gone to European, Southeast Asian and Gulf carriers. "That's economic wealth we need to bring back to the country; not only IndiGo, but Indian carriers generally have that responsibility."

To be sure, IndiGo has been flying to dozens of destinations across the Middle East, Southeast Asia and Central Asia since 2011, when it first started international operations. However, it has yet to launch its own long-haul services to Europe or North America. Instead, it relies on codeshare partnerships with overseas carriers for onward connectivity. Currently, IndiGo has a 20% share of international traffic from India, according to data from the directorate general of civil aviation (DGCA).

In June 2023, IndiGo announced the purchase of 500 Airbus aircraft, with deliveries scheduled between 2030 and 2035. HT

The first step is to further densify the domestic network before launching long-haul, Bhatia said. A later phase could see IndiGo carry passengers between third countries via India, such as "from Europe to Australia, or from China to Africa".

In June 2023, IndiGo announced the purchase of 500 Airbus aircraft, with deliveries scheduled to begin in 2030 and end in 2035. IndiGo's order came on the back of an earlier order of 480 planes that runs until 2030 for the carrier.

Bhatia said the next phase of growth will also see InterGlobe's hospitality business — including Accor's portfolio in India from Raffles to Ibis — being listed within the next two years, while IndiGo's BluChip loyalty business standing on its own feet as it scales up.

The airline is positioning BluChip, which has over 10 million members, as a future standalone business. "It'll earn its own money... any inventory exchanged will be sold at market prices," Bhatia said.

In India, where IndiGo is a rare airline to survive and succeed despite the vicissitudes of civil aviation, Bhatia points to the management's "... fetish about maintaining and improving our cost leadership". This is crucial in an environment often marked by turbulence from fuel price volatility and geopolitical events, which businesses have little control over.

IndiGo's success in gaining a dominant share in the Indian skies has also raised concerns among regulators. Bhatia, however, explains that one should analyse the market share. "We need to break it down a little, because there's constant discourse about it: 'Hey, 65% market share, what's happening?' I think we have done a poor job of not educating the world at large," he said, adding that about one-third of the 66% share comes from markets where nobody else is flying.

"That one-third represents, give or take, 250 city pairs where no other airline flies. It's not that nobody is allowed—everybody's welcome. We are fulfilling our duty as a good corporate citizen to our country by connecting cities that have never been connected before; there is a massive list of them. One-third of our production is to unique markets. In the markets that we actually compete in, our share is not 66%, it's only 44%," he explained.

Some of these cities where no other carrier flies include Agra, Bareilly, Bhavnagar, Nashik, and Tuticorin, according to Bhatia. "So, while the world seemingly begrudges us for our scale, what they don't appreciate is what we do to bring the hinterland in—integrating it into the mainland," he added.

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THE HINDU CHENNAI 30 JULY 2026

No abnormality in fuel switch of grounded AI plane: Centre

Minister says inspections of the Boeing 787 plane conducted at a U.S. facility found no defect in the fuel control switch, which has come under scrutiny following the AI 171 crash in Ahmedabad

Jagriti Chandra
NEW DELHI

The Union government has informed Parliament that inspections had found "no abnormality" in the fuel control switch of an Air India Boeing 787 aircraft that was grounded earlier this year after a pilot reported a suspected malfunction before operating a London-Bengaluru flight.

"Detailed examination of the fuel control switch, including structural integrity of the fuel control switch detents was carried out, and no abnormality was observed," Union Minister of State for Civil Aviation Murlidhar Mohol told the Rajya Sabha earlier this week, referring to inspections conducted at the original equipment manufacturer's (OEM) facility in Seattle, U.S.

Further examination of the complete "thrust control module", which houses the fuel control switches, was still under way at the OEM's facility, Mr. Mohol said.

The response in Parliament pertains to Air India flight AI 132 from London to Bengaluru on February 1. REPRESENTATIVE IMAGE

The government's response has assumed significance because fuel control switches are at the centre of the preliminary investigation into the AI 171 crash in Ahmedabad on June 12, 2025, in which 260 people were killed.

The preliminary report by the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB) said the ill-fated Air India flight AI 171's two fuel control switches transitioned from 'RUN' to 'CUTOFF', interrupting fuel supply to both engines and causing them to lose power. The report did not establish whether the movement of the switches was inadvertent or deliberate. The AAIB's final report is expected between mid-September and the end of October.

The reply in Parliament pertains to Air India flight AI 132 from London to Bengaluru on February 1 this year. Before departure, the pilot had reported that the left engine's fuel control switch on the aircraft did not remain positively latched in the 'RUN' position when pressure was applied. The switch latched correctly on a subsequent attempt, according to the government, following which the flight departed for Bengaluru. Air India subsequently grounded the aircraft for detailed inspections.

The U.K.'s aviation safety regulator later sought information from Air India on the maintenance carried out on the fuel control switch before the aircraft was cleared for the flight from London.

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MINT | DELHI | 31 JULY 2026

IndiGo maps flight to global skies, after building India fort

Varun Sood & Satish John
GURUGRAM

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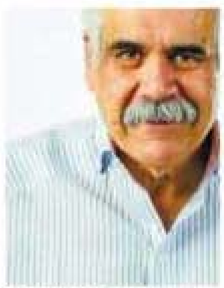

Rahul Bhatia, promoter and managing director of IndiGo.

TURN TO PAGE 8

Execution is key: Interview with Rahul Bhatia >P14

IndiGo maps flight to global skies after building India fort

FROM PAGE 1

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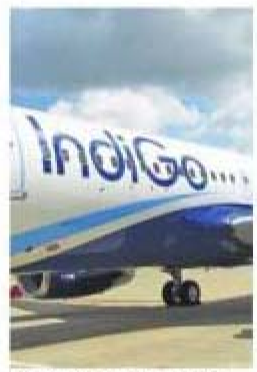

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MINT DELHI 31 JULY 2026

Adani Group has no plans to operate an airline, says CFO

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MUMBAI

The Adani Group is exploring the possibility of picking a non-controlling stake in regional carriers to improve connectivity to its existing and future small airports, but has no plans to operate an airline, a top executive said on Wednesday.

"We're not starting an airline or business, but to be able to support the development of an airline for regional connectivity is our interest," Adani Group's chief financial officer (CFO) Jugeshinder Singh told analysts during a post-earnings call of flagship firm Adani Enterprises Ltd.

The clarification comes four days after Adani Enterprises informed stock exchanges that it was "not evaluating any proposal to enter the airline business."

Adani Group CFO Jugeshinder Singh. REUTERS

Airport operators can hold up to a 10% equity stake in an airline under existing regulations. Singh said that a recent letter written by Adani Airport Holdings, an entity under Adani Enterprises, to the Airports Authority of India, seeking a change in rules to allow it to have a larger stake in an airline, should be viewed in the context of promoting regional connectivity rather than as a precursor to launching an airline.

"We want to see, as owners of airports and regional airports, that India's regional airline system also develops and develops properly," he said.

The clarification follows a report by *The Economic Times* last week that the Ahmedabad-based conglomerate had written to the AAI seeking a waiver of the clause that prevents the airport operator from holding more than a 10% stake in any scheduled carrier, fuelling speculation that the infrastructure conglomerate was preparing to enter India's commercial aviation market.

Singh dismissed the report and said the company's intent was misunderstood.

For an extended version of this story, go to livemint.com.

THE PIONEER DELHI 31 JULY 2026

Lower taxes can unlock massive air travel demand, says IndiGo's Rahul Bhatia

PRESS TRUST OF INDIA
New Delhi

IndiGo Managing Director Rahul Bhatia urged the government to cut taxes and rationalise airport charges, arguing that lower airfares would unlock "massive" demand in one of the world's fastest-growing aviation markets and accusing policymakers of taxing flying as if it were "an elitist mode of transport".

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"I think some of these things have to get rationalised. Because the Indian consumer is so price sensitive that if you can lower fares, you just open up a massive demand."

Bhatia said airlines had largely absorbed cost pressures instead of passing them on to passengers.

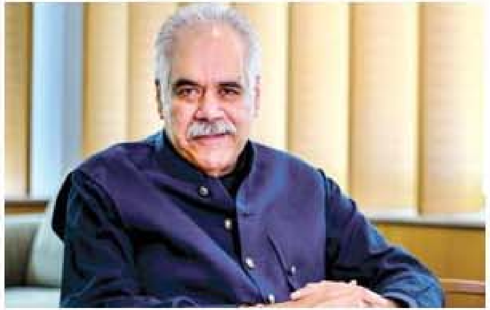
"So, in a time span of three years where inflation has risen by 12 per cent, airfares, which represent the fares that the airline collects for themselves, have gone up between 1 per cent and 3 per cent. UDF (User Development Fee) charges at airports have gone up as much as 95 per cent.

"Landing and parking charges have gone up as much as 34 per cent... airlines actually do their utmost to make sure that fares are competitive," he noted.

He said IndiGo, which controls 66.3 per cent of India's domestic market, had a responsibility to lead fare increases when surging costs made them unavoidable.

"I think the responsibility lies on IndiGo to lead the charge...if the fuel goes up 30 per cent and nobody raises fares, it's an excruciating pain for the industry," he said.

"And... if they don't, we'll go back and bring our fares down." Aviation turbine fuel accounts for around 40 per cent of airlines' operating costs, while carriers have also been hit by higher oil prices and longer flying times because of airspace restrictions linked to the West Asia conflict."



Managing Director of IndiGo (InterGlobe Aviation Ltd) Rahul Bhatia poses for photographs PTI

IndiGo's best defence against fuel price volatility was operating increasingly fuel-efficient aircraft, Bhatia said, adding that to the best of his knowledge, no Indian airline currently hedges fuel prices.

Responding to concerns over IndiGo's market dominance, Bhatia said about one-third of the airline's capacity was deployed on around 250 unique city pairs where it had created new markets.

"If 34 per cent of your share is in unique markets, our share in markets that we compete in is only just in the early 40s, 42, 44 per cent...So, I think it's a myth of sorts that we are too large," he said.

Airfares are not regulated by the government.

Airlines' operating costs are dynamic in nature, and their individual components vary due to multiple factors such as the price of Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) in international markets, foreign exchange rates, excise duties and Value Added Tax (VAT) and lease rentals.

In recent times, operating costs of airlines have sailed northwards due to a jump in oil prices and longer flying hours due to airspace curbs amid the West Asia conflict.

Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF) or jet fuel alone accounts for around 40 per cent of an airline's operating expenses. The jet fuel is taxed at different rates by different states.

"Just because we consume so much ATF does not mean we are experts at determining what the Brent prices will be tomorrow morning. But our natural hedge today, to the extent possible, is obviously increasingly flying more and more fuel-efficient aircraft. So, if you fly planes that are 50 per cent more fuel-efficient, you have a hedge there.

"Currently, in India, to the best of my understanding, no other airline hedges. And then, of course, the fuel goes up. Then the other thing airlines try to do is start to raise fares to see how much of it will get absorbed by the consumers," Bhatia said.

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PUNJAB KESARI DELHI 31 JULY 2026

एअर इंडिया विमान हादसे के सभी पहलुओं पर गौर किया जा रहा

नई दिल्ली, (पंजाब केसरी): सरकार ने बृहस्पतिवार को संसद को बताया कि पिछले साल हुए एअर इंडिया विमान हादसे की जांच कर रहा वायुयान दुर्घटना अन्वेषण ब्यूरो (एएआईबी) हादसे के मूल कारण और इसके लिए जिम्मेदार परिस्थितियों का पता लगाने के वास्ते सभी पहलुओं पर गौर कर रहा है। गुजरात के अहमदाबाद हवाई अड्डे से उड़ान भरने के कुछ ही देर बाद 12 जून 2025 को एअर इंडिया के बोइंग 787-8 विमान के दुर्घटनाग्रस्त होने से 260 लोगों की मौत हो गई थी। यह 'ड्रीमलाइनर' विमान अहमदाबाद से लंदन स्थित गैटविक जा रहा था। नागर विमानन राज्य मंत्री मुरलीधर मोहोल ने लोकसभा में एक प्रश्न के लिखित उत्तर में कहा कि हादसे की एएआईबी द्वारा जांच जारी है।

सरकार का दावा

एएआईबी ने 12 जुलाई 2025 को दुर्घटना पर अपनी प्रारंभिक रिपोर्ट जारी की थी और इस साल 12 जून को जांच पर अंतरिम बयान जारी किया था। मंत्री ने कहा, 'जांच जारी है। दुर्घटना के सभी संभावित कारणों की जांच की जा रही है। जांच पूरी होने के बाद अंतिम रिपोर्ट जारी की जाएगी।' यह जवाब एएआईबी द्वारा एआई 171 विमान दुर्घटना पर अंतिम रिपोर्ट जारी करने की समयसीमा और जांच की मौजूदा स्थिति से जुड़े सवाल के जवाब में दिया गया। इसके अलावा, यह भी पूछा गया था कि क्या सरकार ने विमान के ईंधन 'स्विच' बंद होने के संबंध में दावा किये गए अलग-अलग सिद्धांतों पर गौर किया है और क्या इंजन तथा मुख्य कंप्यूटर नेटवर्क के हिस्सों को तकनीकी जांच के लिए विदेश भेजा गया है। साथ ही, यह भी पूछा गया था कि क्या विदेशी विमान विनिर्माता कंपनियां या अन्य इकाइयां कोई महत्वपूर्ण सुरक्षा संबंधी आंकड़े रोक रही हैं।

इन सवालों के जवाब में मोहोल ने कहा, 'दुर्घटना के मूल कारण और इसके लिए जिम्मेदार परिस्थितियों का पता लगाने के वास्ते जांच में सभी पहलुओं पर गौर किया जा रहा है।'